1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

II. SOCIAL LIFE

GOVERNMENT—PROPERTY

Settlements were minute: Jack recalled none with as many as ten huts; usually there were from two to four. As a child he lived with his parents and maternal grandparents; the neighbors, about thirty feet away, were not kin.

Though Bill spoke of Captain Jim as chief (te.upe"yu) of all the Washo, this was probably a recent development. Bill could not say whether Jim had inherited the office from his father. When the "captain" went to Washington, D.C., he took with him as assistant Dick Bender, who had been to the Indian School in Carson and spoke fair English. It is not clear that Jim and Dick were related, but both were p'alaa"ci (see below).

The chief had nothing to do with fighting enemies or adjusting quarrels within the tribe; his sole function was to arrange dances and other gatherings, where he would exhort the Washo to be good (Dave, Bill). Jack's notion of a typical speech follows:[1]

> Behave well, do not fight, play! If you lose, do not get angry. Play ball; some win, others lose. Play the basket game. Shoot rabbits, eat them. Make soup and eat it. After a while, shoot deer. Shoot grouse, sage hen, mountain quail, ground hogs, ground squirrels, meadow squirrels, small squirrels, mice. Go and hunt antelope and mountain sheep. Spear fish!

Daisy Bender and Big Susie gave this version of one of Captain Jim's speeches:[2]

> Dance! Interlocking your fingers, dance! Husbands, interlock fingers, now with interlocking fingers dance! Dance! Then dance with your wives. Behave properly! Don't fight. Dance with your wives, make your wives sleep well.

Special headmen led in hunting jack rabbits, deer, and antelope, respectively. The antelope headman dreamed the right to office; the two others were purely secular leaders, the rabbit chief, according to Dave, being chosen by the people.

Property rights were maintained for clumps of pine-nut trees, patches being marked off by lines of rocks. Bill's patch was west of Double Spring, he and his brother, Charlie Buell, having inherited from their father. Bill's mother claimed clumps west of Mountain House, some falling to my informant's share. Sally, his sister, might properly have claimed part, but did not do so. Brothers never quarreled over pine-nut privileges; and if they had plenty, they would allow a married sister to pick from their tract. On the other hand, trespass by a stranger was resented, the owner rebuking him with such words as, "Don't pick pine nuts here! They are not yours, but mine." This might even lead to fighting. Mrs. Hardy, the postmistress of Coleville (in 1926), told me that the Indians meticulously respected one another's claims. Dave's father and paternal uncle owned four patches, of which Dave inherited one. A thief's pole was sometimes broken up by the rightful owner of a patch.

[1] Recorded in Washo. [2] Recorded in Washo.

[P. 369, A]

CURING AND SHAMANISM

(2469-2541)

756 [192] The Washo word da?man?li? has a wide range of meanings which include almost all people with supernatural powers, including curers of several orders. The terms which they use when discussing the subject in English are somewhat more precise and will be used in this paper.

The Washo make a distinction between curers (2594-96) and Indian doctors. The latter, as will be shown, are true shamans whereas the former are somewhat less powerful. Curers appear to be women who have certain powers revealed to them in dreams. Such persons are usually members of what the Washo describe as a "doctor family." An informant described the activities of such a curer:

> "My mother was a curer. She just smoke and talk. You would meet her on the way to town mebbe and say 'I don't feel good' and she'd just sit down and smoke and talk [pray?] a little and then mebbe tell you what was wrong and what you should do.
>
> [755] "Along about the first war I got sick and couldn't make no water at all. My mother smoked and then spread ashes all over my belly and talked some and after that I passed a lot of blood and got better."[1]

Far more important than the curers, however, were the Indian doctors. Such men were never exclusive specialists and were apparently expected to share in the work of hunting and fishing with less gifted men. [177] With the introduction of money by the whites, shamans [436] appear to have approached something like specialization, charging fees of up to twenty dollars a session for their services.

Until the middle 1930's there were a number of shamans among the Washo (Stewart 1944). However, with the introduction of the peyote cult, which among the Washo is concerned with curing, the shaman was superseded. Today only a single Washo practices shamanistic curing. Interestingly enough this man, now 756 seventy-five, was an informant of Lowie's in the 1920's, 115 and at that time Lowie described him as a sophisti- [871] cated young Washo, somewhat mystic and with shamanistic ambitions (Lowie 1939).

This man, Henry Rupert, spent ten years in the Indian school at the Stewart Agency and after graduation worked for a number of years in a printing plant in Reno. When questioned about the old days he was a fair informant, seldom offering more information than was asked for and clearly enjoying the business of making a white man work for every scrap of information. He was also given to dropping subtle hints and waiting with stolid indifference to see if I had been alert. He did not deny his shamanistic practices but was less than willing to discuss them in detail.

[534] His equipment, he admitted (but refused to show me), [237] consisted of a butterfly-cocoon rattle, an eagle-bone whistle, and a feather headband. "I don't really do nothing but help nature," he said. When I replied that only some people know how to help nature he was

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[1] Regular Indian doctors were forbidden to treat members of their own families, a prohibition which appears not to have extended to a non-shamanistic curer.

[P. 396, B]

881 178 and was obviously unimpressed. The crowd gathered slowly and gradually began to dance. He makes no mention of either the wand or the ash-dusting ritual, nor does he give us details of the feast. The bath was given from a tin can, and he does not report a basket's being thrown (Lowie 1939, pp. 305-308).

One suspects that dances held today are somewhat more elaborate than those of three or four decades ago, possibly as a response to increasing awareness [535] and pride in the fact of Indianness. Certainly every girl expects to have her dance, just as a debutante expects to have a coming-out party. When death in the family made it inadvisable to hold a dance on a girl's first menstrual period, everyone agreed that it was indeed a shame. The girl went through her four-day fast and a small party was held for her when her [841] second period occurred. One informant insisted that in the "old days" a dance was always held on the occasion of a girl's second period but that this had long since been abandoned (Cartwright, 1952, confirms).

881 178 285 The basket plays an important part in the ceremony and it would be considered improper if there were no basket to be thrown to the crowd. It is best if the basket is well made and can actually hold the ceremonial bath water. If such a basket cannot be obtained, and they are growing rarer as the older basket makers die, the bath is poured from a bucket, but a less fancy basket is still thrown to the crowd. The bath and dusting are now given to the girl while clad in her slip, [177] in deference to white notions of modesty which are [302] strictly observed by the Washo. The painting is carried out only if native pigment is available. The wand is left unpainted unless native pigments are available.

881 178 The ritual of seizing and hiding the wand is carried out perfunctorily. During a recent dance the girl's uncle took the wand but simply carried it to the grandmother's house, intending to take it to the mountains later. However, the stick remained with the grandmother, who was somewhat concerned about it. It was kept in an upright position, and she constantly reminded the man that he should take it. He regularly promised that he would, the next time he came to visit, but just as regularly forgot it. It may well be that as an adult and an important peyote chief, he was reluctant to carry out what he considered an old Indian superstition.

881 177 178 [535] [871] There is no indication now that the girls' puberty dance is dying out among the Washo. It may well be changing in form and developing into more of a party. As the number of persons who know white dances increases, these may replace Indian dances. There is some suggestion of this in other ceremonial activities. And of course the fact that future generations of Washo girls will attend integrated Nevada public schools and associate with white students with different aspirations for approaching adulthood may have important effects on the future of the girls' dance.

881 262 178 574 Pine-nut flour seems to have taken on an important symbolic role in latter-day dances. We see no mention of this food in 1919 or 1926. Today it might be considered proper to delay holding a dance if it was not possible to get enough pine-nut flour to feed the crowd.

PUBERTY: BOYS
(2379-2386, 369-374)

881 The approaching maturity of a boy cannot be measured in dramatic physiological terms, and puberty is considered to occur about when a boy's voice changes.

western Nevada (Thompson and West 1881, 67). Overgrazing depleted Washo food in grass seeds and permanently effected the ecological balance in this period. 175 648

1861 - Warren Wasson, U. S. Indian Agent at Carson Valley Agency, in reports to Governor Nye of Nevada Territory in July and August wrote "within the limits of this Agency...the Washoes number 550...have no property of any kind...they have no schools...They have learned that the great chief or captain at Washington, through the lesser captain here, must feed them or help to do so at least. There is great justice in this request. The streams in which they formerly fished are now all spoiled for that purpose by the operating of the miners and the washing of the ores and metals. They are indeed most all diverted from their original courses, or dammed so frequently that the fish have disappeared from them. Lake Bigler, lying in the country of the Washoes, and from which they formerly obtained large quantities of the best kind of fish, is now taken possession of by the whites, and has become a watering place, to which large numbers from this Territory and California resort, and from which this poor tribe are virtually excluded. The hills and plains over which roamed plenty of game are now occupied by the Whites, and the game has fled, like the Indians from their presence" (Ingalls 1913, 35). [161] [171]

U. S. Congress approved Nevada Territory under pressure of the slavery question and the wealth of Comstock mining. 175

1862 - "By 1862 Burke and Company were using a half-mile seine to take tons of Tahoe trout daily from the waters of Boundary Bay" (Scott 1957, 443).

1863 - Silver Mountain (first known as Koenigsberg) was a mining boom town in the 1860's with a population of 3,000. (California Interstate Telephone Co. 1959, 3).

1864 - Statehood proclaimed for Nevada, 36th state.

1868 - First transcontinental railroad, Central Pacific, completed through Nevada. With the coming of the railroad new towns sprang up as centers for ranches and farms.

A Washo shot by a homesteader for setting a fish trap on a creek leading into Lake Tahoe (Scott 1957, 64). [648]

1870 - 11,500 acres of land under cultivation on the East Fork of the Carson River.

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The Washo lacked well tailored clothing necessary for extensive winter travel. Their techniques of production were geared to small scale household [291] use so that tradeable surpluses were rarely acquired. The Washo were organized into small scale groupings with few specilizations of labor. They [433] lacked adequate storage techniques for fish and game so that surpluses in [621] these foods were not preserved. Also inter-tribal frictions and hatreds often [463] prevented safe travel outside of Washo territory. There are indications that [251] once the Whites established an effective government over Washo and surrounding territory, trade and marriage between Indians from different tribes [628] increased significantly. The Carson Indian Boarding School, established [648] in 1890, became an important factor in developing intertribal cooperation by providing a situation in which individuals from several tribes could meet and [871] become friends.

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Certain kinds of goods were particularly heavy in the trade traffic of aboriginal Great Basin and California. Davis (1961, 12-4) gives an idea of what these items were in California. In order of importance they were marine shells and beads, salt, basketry, hides and pelts, bows, acorns, fish, pinenuts, obsidian, pigments, miscellaneous vegetal foods, rabbit skin blankets, arrows, and a number of less important items.

In one table Davis (ibid., pp. 12-4) lists 83 traded items. The Washo used 53 of these items. Except for five items made of marine shells and "Caucasian goods", all 53 of the items used by the Washo were gathered or made by the Washo.

Pacific coast beads and pendants were used for personal adornment, but [301] they were unimportant in face of the competition with local shell, plant, [439] bone, and stone materials.

It is probable that all of the 53 items in the list by Davis were occasionally [439] received by Washo from non-Washo through trade. Even items that were abundant within Washo territory such as pinenuts, fish, basketry, and rabbit skin blankets may have been received by trade in special instances. Lists of things traded are of little value unless they reflect volume.

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The goods most exported to the Miwok and Maidu were salt, pinenuts, obsidian, skins, and several Washo manufactures such as rabbit skin blankets and basketry. In return the Washo received principally acorns, soaproot for combs and brushes, a variety of medicinal plants, and occasionally manufactures such as baskets and yew bows. Few acorns were received by the Washo through trade unless the local crop was poor. All the other plants traded were received primarily through gathering and not trade.

Both Davis (1961) and Sample (1950), in their summaries of California trade, repeated a view held by Barrett and Gifford (1933, 193, 221). It is [114]

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171 the consequence of such restrictions is to create aggressive tendencies that must be canalized in some culturally approved manner so that psychological and intrasocietal conflicts are minimized.

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154 Nadel takes issue with the latter point. He argues that it is a false
171 assumption "that witchcraft beliefs 'canalize' hostility or 'deflect' hostile
121 impulses into socially relatively harmless channels" (1952, 28). Presenting
114 evidence from four societies in Africa, he points out that belief in sorcerers is "conspicuously related to specific anxieties," (1952, 28) and therefore it only accentuates concrete hostilities. Though Kluckhohn, for one, would probably not have denied the "costs" of witchcraft, he did feel these were frequently stated without recognizing the potential euphoric effects of beliefs in witchcraft for the social system as a whole (1944, 67-8).

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174 The Washo provided an opportunity for an exploration of this differ-
154 ence in opinion. Since the Washo belief in the prevalence of witches changed
[178] drastically over a period of approximately 15 years, we were able to ask the question of whether the elimination of witches as objects of aggression would help solidify the society, as Nadel suggested, or would create a need for new opportunities for releasing aggressions.

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871 In addition to addressing ourselves to the function of witchcraft in
754 Washo society, we were also concerned with education, the intervening vari-
154 able between frustration and the acceptable objects of aggression. Of course, members of a society do not usually consciously employ the educational process for this purpose, and the presence of sorcerers rather than some other kind of scapegoat can only be accounted for by particular historical developments in Washo culture, but the transmission of knowledge about certain phenomena will obviously affect the possibility of their being manipulated as objects of aggression.

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756 The Washo were a fairly typical Great Basin group, according to Edgar Siskin, who visited them in the late 1930's, except for their fear of and belief in the power of shamans, which he thought achieved "an unsurpassed eminence in the Washo" (1941, 125). Lowie, after briefly visiting the Washo in 1927, observed that a correlation of shamanistic power with evil magic was prevalent in their world-view, and he relates several instances in which shamans
[683] were supposed to have been responsible for deaths. When this would happen four or five men would finally agree to murder the shaman. One of Lowie's informants believed one of the shamans, or Indian doctors, as the Washo call them, to have been "mad." "He tries to poison us all, it seems to us. That's the way he used to do in the old days. A Washo doctor always tried to injure his own people in the old days" (Lowie, 1939, 320).

TABLE I:

Mean Blood Pressures, by Age and Sex,
for Washo Indians

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Age	Males	N	Females	N
25 and below	124/79	(5)	119/78	(13)
26 - 45	137/90	(19)	122/78	(20)
46 - 65	133/89	(13)	146/88	(13)
66 and above	157/91	(8)	158/90	(9)
TOTAL	138/91	(45)	132/82	(55)

Nine variables were selected for analysis in terms of their relation to the presence or absence of hypertension. Six of the nine were associated with hypertension at, or better than, the 10% level of significance: 147 158 121

1. Age. Increasing age was associated with an increase in the percentage of elevated blood pressures.

2. Sex. Males have a higher percentage of elevated pressures than do females.

3. Obesity. Using standardized criteria the sample was divided into three groups: normal, overweight and obese. There was a significant increase in the percentage of elevated pressures from the normal to the overweight to the obese groups.

4. Education. The sample was divided into three groups: those who attended schools in the white community, those who attended boarding schools for Indians, and those who had not attended formal schools. The percentage of elevated pressures was highest in the first group and lowest in the last, the differences being statistically significant. No significant statistical association was found between blood pressure and amount of education. [871]

5. Alcoholism. Data were collected on 40 of the males as to whether they were observed by the authors to be frequently drinking or drunk, and whether or not certain key members of the community considered them to be "heavy drinkers." For purposes of analysis they were divided into two groups: [273]

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158 The stress hypothesis gains additional support from the relationship of selected variables to hypertension. The six variables found to be significantly related to hypertension represent a mixed bag. Age, sex and obesity are biological variables for the most part, whereas religion, education and alcoholism are social. This is not surprising if one accepts the current view of hypertension as a multi-causal disease. Additionally, the kinds of associations found do not necessarily imply causation. A great deal more epidemiological research must be carried out before we can begin to understand the etiology of hypertension.

With regard to the specific variables studied, the relationships between sex, age, obesity and elevated blood pressure merely support similar findings in the great bulk of studies reported for other societies. The other three variables, however, are of greater interest, particularly as regards the stress hypothesis.

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158 It has been indicated that attendance at white schools is positively as-
● 871 sociated with hypertension, in contrast to attendance at Indian boarding
648 schools, or no formal education at all. It can be argued that attending a white school is a stressful experience for a Washo and, extending the argument, that this stress later reflects itself in increasing blood pressure. Why is such schooling thought to be stressful? In the first place, several of those who have undergone this experience seem to feel it was. Several Washo have expressed bitterness, if not hostility, regarding the treatment they felt they received not only from the teachers of these schools but from the parents of fellow white students as well. It is of some incidental interest that in general these feelings did not extend to the white students themselves but only to their parents. This subjective evaluation of their educational experience seems warranted in the light of the objective situation. According to one white high school principal, Washo students, particularly in the past, did poorly in their studies in contrast to the white students. Furthermore, the principal corroborated the prejudiced feelings of white parents who, in his experience, had objected to the Washo's being allowed to attend the school in the first place, and have since objected to any sort of extracurricular activity that would allow the Washo to associate socially with white children. Interviews with members of the white communities of Minden and Gardnerville, the two white communities closest to Dresslerville, clearly indicate that for the most part these people do not have a high regard for the Washo and do not appreciate their attendance at the same schools. These indications seem to constitute a good case for the stressful nature of the educational experience.

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158 Alcoholic behavior can be interpreted as stressful on two counts:
273 first as a reflection of underlying psychological stresses and anxieties, and second as generating further stress in the form of reaction from white and

231 Generally, news accounts suggest that most Washo were still
[489] pedestrian. Modern informants in their fifties confirm this, and recall acorn gathering, hunting, and pinenut trips made on foot. Older white informants recall that the Indians had "a few" horses in their boyhood, which was in the 1880's.

177 222 492 Washo informants report that part of their recompense for assisting in harvests was the transportation to the pinenut groves furnished by the ranchers. This shortened the time consumed in traveling, and allowed the Washo to pick more nuts because the return trip was also made in wagons furnished by the whites.

175 177 492 764 Another newspaper account of the late 19th century reports that the Washo of the Genoa colony borrowed a team and wagon in order to transport the body of a well known Indian woman to the Indian cemetery.

177 423 [233] Of other livestock there is no report. Cattle were probably killed and eaten when opportunity or income made it possible, but no one, white or Washo, can recall any attempt at animal husbandry. One suspects that any such attempt would have been quickly discouraged by white ranchers. There was no long frontier period during which land ownership was ambiguous in Nevada. Less than 20 years after the first settlement Nevada was admitted as a state, and, soon after, stock laws that encouraged fencing and other clarification of land holdings were instituted. Timber and water rights were extremely profitable almost from the beginning of white settlement and were, therefore, quickly secured by law and protected. Some of the Washo early established claims under squatters' rights or homestead laws and secured legally protected lands for themselves. However, most such claims were made in areas considered as winter camps with reference to wood, water, [313] [464] and shelter rather than grazing. In later times such claims proved to be valuable for timber, and many Washo became profitably involved in the lumbering business in positions varying from lumberjack to timber cruiser, buyer or hauler, laborer in lumber mills, and in one instance the owner of 177 a lumber mill. In the 1890's many Washo became owners of teams of horses 222 and wagons, which they used in their subsistence rounds. The acorn gather- 492 ing trip to Big Trees in Calaveras County was made by several families at a time. The traditional en route camping spots were often bypassed in favor of locations with grass for grazing the teams. Similar trips were made to Placerville to pick acorns. In both instances, these trips became possible 177 only after the whites had constructed roads over the mountains. Their in- 241 volvement in the agricultural processes of white men had taught most Washo 971 men the basic techniques of driving teams hitched to mowers, hay rakes, or [492] wagons by the 1890's. Farm skills were taught at the Stewart Indian School, which for a number of years served only local Indians. However, most men

However, most men who attended Stewart express resentment at being worked on the school farm, although they evidence pride over their attendance and resent bitterly that the school now serves Indians of many tribes. 177 241 871 [86]

In the past and today, local white folklore holds that Washo are inexpert horsemen and cannot learn to be cowboys. I can neither confirm nor deny this opinion, because I failed to see a single Washo on horseback during my visit. One man, biologically if not culturally a Washo, owns a string of pack and riding horses which he rents to hunters for whom he serves as guide. However, this occupation appears to be one of the reasons other Washo feel he has "gone on the white man's road." 492 [422] [427] [178]

One significant but short-lived effect of the introduction of the horse was that it permitted rabbit hunters to kill more rabbits than in pre-horse days. Rabbit drives were usually conducted by men using bows and guns, the net having been abandoned very soon after white contact. Each man carried his kill on a belt that could hold up to 17 rabbits. A hunter with a horse could have his wife, son, or younger brother ride or lead a horse behind him to carry the kill. In this way, a good shot could take as many as 40 rabbits a day. However, the very nature of this utilization discouraged the wider institutionalization of the horse. Following the hunter required no equestrian skill and, in fact, was a secondary role to be abandoned as soon as the rider, if he was a boy, was old enough or could afford a weapon of his own. 177 224 492

Older informants recall that some Washo were hired as riders to accompany cattle herds to the railhead or into high range. It is significant that they mention specifically that only this temporary type of herding job was available and make it clear that no Washo became a year-round cowboy. 464 492

It appears clear from statements of informants that Washo quickly adopted the automobile and abandoned wagons and teams. As Cook points out, the automobile gave back to the pedestrian Indian a mobility he had lost during the interval between the appearance of the whites and the development of the automobile (Cook, 1941, 84). I feel that this change took place because the Washo had never made the adjustments necessary to maintain horses or other livestock efficiently, and therefore welcomed the automobile, which ceased to make demands on its owner's time and attention as soon as he turned off the ignition and got out. Moreover the appearance of the railroad within a few years after the arrival of the whites obviated the need for the horse for long-distance travel. Early day railroad "public relations" policy permitted Indians throughout the West to ride without charge. In return, the Indians often warned railroaders of broken track, washouts, and other obstructions. 177 489 492 493 177 489